THE EVANGELICAL CATHOLIC

Newsletter of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission in the Episcopal Church

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Female Bishops

The Ecumenical Implications

by the Rev'd Samuel L. Edwards, SSC

This essay is the last in the series on the effects of ordaining a woman to the episcopate. The first, the Rev'd Robert Waggener's "Female Bishops: The Pastoral Implications," appeared in the November 1986 issue. The second, the Rt Rev'd William Wantland's "Female Bishops: The Legal Implications," appeared in the January 1987 issue.

THE PRINCIPAL IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCE to the ecumenical relations of the Episcopal Church of the admission of women to the exercise of the episcopal office will be large-scale confusion. The principal long-term consequences likely will include the dissolution of the Anglican Communion as presently conceived and constituted and the probable assimilation of the present establishment of the Episcopal Church — in a significantly diminished form — into a vague union with other "mainline denominations."

The immediate large-scale confusion in ecumenical matters will be the result of the inevitable dissolution of the present structure of ECUSA in the wake of the actual permitting of a woman to function as a bishop. Generally speaking, this dissolution will take one of two forms: either a separate and largely autonomous jurisdiction for orthodox dissenters will be set up under the ECUSA umbrella, or these dissenters will defect entirely from the present ECUSA institutional structure.

If the latter is the case, the surviving and diminished ECUSA will retain no significant ecumenical prospects with any but its fellow "mainliners." If the former is the case, and there is found a way to contain two divergent ecclesiologies under one institution, one might expect confusion on the part of ecumenical dialogue-partners, some of whom might wish to talk with one part of ECUSA without bothering with the other.

IT IS MY JUDGMENT THAT, if ECUSA as presently constituted breaks up completely, the two parts — orthodox and mainstream — will both go through a period of consolidation with other ecclesial entities. The orthodox fragment will become a new factor in the move toward unification that is already underway in the Continuing Anglican Churches and the formation of a single traditional Anglican Church in the United States probably will take place fairly soon. The mainstream fragment, bereft of the group which once held the reins on its Liberal Protestant ecclesiological tendencies, will probably move with greater despatch toward the "Church of Christ Uniting" — bringing with it a dowry of dubiously-apostolical androgynous episcopacy.

The orthodox consolidation will be natural and based on a common doctrinal base in recognizable continuity with historic Anglican convictions. The mainline consolidation, on the other hand, while it will have a doctrinal element, will likely have another pressing motivation: mutual survival. The state of ECUSA will be parlous in the event of a large orthodox secession. Even if all the property of orthodox parishes and dioceses is retained by the present institution without time- and money-consuming litigation, the remaining establishment will have the problem of maintaining these properties and servicing the debt thereon. This requires pledging members, and the present institution seems not to be able to attract these very well. So the prospect of ecclesiastical merger of some sort will be very appealing from this perspective.

There is a problem with this, however, and one need only step back a little way to get a truer picture of what this chummy togetherness will be worth. So far as the mainline denominations are concerned, merger will be an accomplishment rather like tying several leaky boats together: instead of sinking one by one, they get to sink together. As Dr Thomas Reeves pointed out in the April issue of *The Christian Challenge,* "since the mid-1960s. . .the liberal mainliners have collectively lost more than 4,778,000 members."

Some COCUmenist Episcopalian die-hards might object that such an arrangement would invigorate the mainstreamers, since all would be able to avail themselves of the Historic Episcopate and receive a clergy with episcopal ordination. As Garfield the Cat might say, "big, fat, hairy deal!" A tactile succession, and a doubtful one at that, without continuity with apostolic doctrine (which includes apostolic order in the final analysis) is only one degree above absolute zero in worth, as we are learning even now to our sorrow, and that is all that such an arrangement would offer its participants.

If the consequence of the admission of women to episcopal functioning is two separate ecclesial structures, what we shall eventually see is a merger of some sort by the mainline group with other mainline Protestants, forming a large declining Church out of a number of smaller declining Churches. Further ecumenical prospects for this body will be quite limited. More conservative Protestant bodies will have neither the inclination nor the incentive to spend much time in talks with a group that will be doctrinally vague and socially trendy. The Roman Church will probably maintain

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THE EVANGELICAL CATHOLIC

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The Evangelical and Catholic Mission is a fellowship of orthodox clergy and laity within the Episcopal Church. It is Evangelical in affirming the faith grounded in the authority of Holy Scripture. It is Catholic in adhering to the faith and practice of the ancient, undivided, and Apostolic Church. Its Mission is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to teach the whole faith to all peoples.

Members of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission have pledged themselves to uphold and proclaim the evangelical and catholic faith of the apostolic Church, the Biblical doctrine of Christ as defined at Chalcedon, the uniqueness of the Gospel of the grace of God through Christ in the power and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the supreme and binding authority of Scripture as the divinely revealed Word and will of God in all matters of faith and practice, and the obligation, laid upon the Church by the risen Lord, to guard and preach this Word throughout the world.

Episcopalians who agree with its purposes and beliefs are invited to join the Evangelical and Catholic Mission by writing the address below.

The Rt Rev'd William L. Stevens
Bishop of Fond du Lac
President

The Rt Rev'd Clarence C. Pope, Jr.
Bishop of Fort Worth
Vice-President

The Evangelical and Catholic Mission, Post Office Box 10077, Fort Dearborn Station, Chicago, IL 60610.

Report of the ECM National Council Meeting

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission, meeting in Wisconsin on May 18 and 19, approved several actions strengthening the orthodox witness in the Episcopal Church.

The most important resolution, originally developed by the Houston chapter and reviewed by the Alaskan chapter, responded to the erosion of traditional Christianity "by attacks on Biblical morality, on revealed religion, and on the apostolic ministry." After some discussion, mostly of wording, the resolution was adopted by a unanimous vote. It is printed on the next page.

It was also decided that the Rt Rev'd William Stevens, bishop of Fond du Lac and President of ECM, would send a letter to the Presiding Bishop expressing ECM's dissatisfaction with the membership of his Committee On Women in the Episcopate, none of whose nine members hold "the traditional, orthodox theological viewpoint." "At best," the letter suggests,

> this seems contrary to the usual practice so widely enjoyed that such committees would have representatives of all viewpoints. The give and take a diversity of opinion allows generally encourages at least progress in understanding, if not outright growth and advancement. At worst a lack of diversity on such an important committee continues to give the impression that the National Church and in this case, you, do not care about the great body of us within the Church who maintain the orthodox theological position concerning the ordained ministry.
>
> We urge you to correct this situation as soon as possible so that worthwhile dialogue may get underway and God's Church may be properly nurtured and supported for all, and not only for some.

This resolution was also passed unanimously.

IN RESPONSE TO THE CONFUSION over the adherence of the Episcopal Church to orthodox morality, a resolution was proposed that the bishops of the Church be asked to publicly affirm their commitment to the Church's recent official statements on Christian morality passed in 1977 and 1979. Only bishops with jurisdiction would be polled and the results would be printed in *The Evangelical Catholic*. This resolution also passed unanimously.

The final major resolution passed responded to the false impression of the American situation fostered by the official Church media. The resolution, passed unanimously after little discussion, read: "Whereas recent official news releases mislead many people worldwide into believing that most Episcopalians support the novel ministry of women in the presbyterate and episcopate, that ECM go on record as stating that there remains within the Episcopal Church a strong body opposing this novel ministry." An expanded version was proposed and will be considered at the national council meeting in October.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE of ECM was discussed at length. Dorothy Spaulding, a member of the Steering Committee, was named Executive Secretary. She will attend to ECM's organizational and administrative affairs.

The next meeting will be on October 22 and 23 in Denver, before the 1987 ECM National Congress.

Members present

(asterisk indicates member of the Steering Committee)

The Rt Rev'd William Stevens of Fond du Lac (President)*
The Rt Rev'd Clarence Pope of Fort Worth (Vice President)*
The Rt Rev'd Stanley Atkins of Eau Claire (retired) (Secretary)*
The Rt Rev'd Charles Gaskell of Milwaukee (retired)
The Rt Rev'd William C.R. Sheridan of Northern Indiana (retired)*
The Rt Rev'd William Wantland of Eau Claire

The Rev'd Keith Acker, San Diego
The Rev'd James Daughtry, Washington, D.C.
The Rev'd Richard Hatfield, Logansport (Indiana)
The Rev'd Gaylord Hitchcock, Westwood (New Jersey)
The Rev'd Dr Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, Philadelphia
The Very Rev'd Jack Iker, Sarasota (Florida)*

The Rev'd Harry Krauss, Philadelphia
The Very Rev'd Edward MacBurney, Davenport
The Rev'd Andrew Mead, Boston
The Rev'd Patrick Murphy, Houston
The Rev'd Edwin Norris, Chicago
The Rev'd J.F. Titus Oates, Boston
The Rev'd Dr Jeffrey Steenson, Philadelphia
The Rev'd Marshall Vang, Schenectady*
The Rev'd John Vruwink, Seattle
The Rev'd Herbert Ward, St Jude's Ranch*
The Rev'd Ralph Walker, Denver*
The Rev'd James Wattley, Long Island
The Rev'd Laurens Williams, Weatherford (Texas)

Mr Charles Flinn, Arlington
Mrs Chris Fouse, Lewisville (Texas)
Mr David Kalvelage, Albany
Mr Fred Martin, Anchorage*
Mr David Mills, Boston (Editor, *The Evangelical Catholic*)
Prof. Thomas Reeves, Racine
Mrs Dorothy Rogers, Dallas*
Mr Karl Sharp, Minneapolis (Treasurer)*
Mrs Dorothy Spaulding, McLean (Virginia)*
Mr Robert Stoltz, Portland (Oregon)
Mrs Frances Swinford, Lexington (Kentucky)

Members not present

The Rt Rev'd David Ball of Albany*
The Rt Rev'd Samuel Espinoza of Guadalajara
The Rt Rev'd Paul Haynes of Southwest Florida
The Rt Rev'd Victor Rivera of San Joaquin
The Rt Rev'd James Warner of Nebraska

The Rev'd Carlos Touche-Porter, Mexico

Dr John Maltsberger, Boston
Mrs Karen Sadock, (New Jersey)

WHEREAS, In recent years traditional Christianity has been eroded by attacks on Biblical morality, on revealed religion and on the apostolic ministry, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Evangelical and Catholic Mission affirms that while the 1979 Book is the Standard *Book of Common Prayer* , the 1928 Book contains rites and language of equal spiritual value and validity, the use of which should be permitted, subject to the ruling of the General Convention of 1979 concerning lectionary and calendar, and be it further

RESOLVED, That ECM proclaims the sanctity of all human life and opposes abortion on demand, and be it further

RESOLVED, That ECM proclaims and endorses the classic Anglican position which was reaffirmed in the House of Bishops' Port St. Lucie Statement in 1977: ". . .to insist upon that which is clearly discerned from Scripture, interpreted by the Tradition of the undivided Church, and enlightened by Spirit-guided Reason, while refraining from the imposition of that which cannot be so demonstrated," and be it further

RESOLVED, That ECM actively denies the right and authority of the General Convention to change the nature of the traditional Apostolic Ministry of the Catholic Church, and be it further

RESOLVED, That ECM actively, vigorously and consistently communicate these beliefs and affirmations to the Presiding Bishop, ECUSA, the General Convention, and to all ecclesiastical and lay leaders throughout the Anglican Communion, and be it further

RESOLVED, That ECM support the efforts of our representatives to negotiate a settlement acceptable to us, or if this be denied, as a last resort to begin to function as an autonomous ecclesial body, and be it further

RESOLVED, That these resolutions be forwarded to all Chapters and Members of ECM and to appropriate representatives of the ecclesiastical and secular press for dissemination as the duly considered and ratified position of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission.

Adopted by unanimous vote of the National Council of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission, 19 May 1987.

Of the All Saints Sisters

by One of Them

ALL SAINTS CONVENT —Yes, Father. — A week-end retreat? Let me give you the Monastery telephone number; men guests stay there, and it would be better for you to talk directly — Oh, a group? Then you want St Gabriel's Retreat House. They can take twenty-four. Let me give you *their* number — No, it's right here on the grounds. — How do you get here? Well —"

How *do* you get here? Various ways, of course, depending on the point of departure. But toward the last, leaving the houses of Catonsville, a suburb of Baltimore, you drive out along what is still a lovely country road, until you pass the entrance of Patapsco State Park with its tall trees and come to stone pillars, a gate, and a multiple sign just inside it:

ALL SAINTS CONVENT

ANNUNCIATION MONASTERY

ST GABRIEL'S RETREAT HOUSE

Private Property — Quiet Zone — Speed Bumps

The speed-bumps became necessary because people driving so fast that they missed the park entrance — and probably some people who never meant to come down this road at all, but made the wrong choice at a tricky division — have been known to zoom around the Convent and out again without slackening speed. Some still try, as the yellow shards of broken tail-light at the speed-bumps testify.

But the visitor who intends to come to the Convent drives on, past the semi-circular drive that leads off to St Gabriel's Retreat House on the right, down a hill and past the smaller building on the left which is the Monastery, and up a hill to the long, three-story building of native stone, looking out across the Patapsco River to the sunset, which is All Saints Convent, the home of the American branch of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor.

THE SOCIETY OF THE All Saints Sisters of the Poor is one of the earliest of the Sisterhoods that blossomed in England in the middle of the nineteenth century. Founded in London in 1851 by Harriet Brownlow Byron, a parishioner of All Saints, Margaret Street, London, the Society took its title from that Church. Though it was never a parish organization, it was very closely connected with All Saints Church, especially during the life of Father William Upton Richards, who had encouraged Mother Harriet in her vocation, and served as the first Chaplain General until his death.

The first All Saints Sisters came to the United States in 1872, sent in response to a call from Father Joseph Richey, rector of Mt Calvary Church in Baltimore. Sister Helen, Sister Serena, and Sister Winifred landed in New York on November 28, and immediately made two friendly connections, for the Sisters of St Mary welcomed them as guests, and before they left for Baltimore Father Charles Grafton (then with the Society of St John the Evangelist in Massachusetts, later Bishop of Fond du Lac) visited them and agreed to act as spiritual director.

Once established in their Mission House in Baltimore, the first work of the Sisters was parish work for Mt Calvary and for St Mary the Virgin, a black congregation closely associated with Mt Calvary. By autumn of 1873, this had extended to teaching; a school for black children was opened, the boys taught by the Mt Calvary curates, Fr Galbraith Perry and Fr Leeson, the girls taught by the Sisters.

The All Saints Sisters are not committed to any one work; they are called to a life of service, the field is not specified. In England, the early Sisters did much nursing and hospital work. And one of those first three Sisters who came to Baltimore, Sister Helen, became the first superintendent of the Bellevue Training School for Nurses in New York — the first such school in the United States. However, the American work of the Sisters developed chiefly into parochial work and homes for needy children.

In 1890 the American congregation became autonomous. The then Sister Superior was installed on December 4 as Reverend Mother Frances Helen, by Bishop William Paret of Maryland. When she died in 1897, the first American-born Mother Superior was elected, Mother Adelaide Frances, who led the community for thirty years.

IN 1917, THE CONVENT moved from Baltimore to its present location. The original parcel of land, generously given by the Baltimore ladies who had sponsored there a Country Home for Children, was extended by purchase; and since it is surrounded by the Patapsco State Park, it has a wonderfully expansive, spacious feeling. One of the children's homes — St Barbara's Home for Girls — was moved also, and installed in a building on the grounds. St Barbara's Home, St Katharine's Home, and St Mary's Home were all closed in the nineteen-thirties, when changing social conditions made them dispensable. At present, in addition to St Gabriel's Retreat House, the only branch house is St Anna's in Philadelphia, a residence for retired women.

The building which was the Country Home for Children became St Gabriel's Convalescent Home, caring for girls who were victims of rheumatic fever, or who for other reasons had been prescribed long-term bedrest. When post-World-War-II changes in medicine made this service unnecessary, it became a pilot-project Training School for retarded Children, and most recently, in 1973, St Gabriel's Retreat House.

The present Mother Superior, Reverend Mother Virginia, has served since 1951. Bishop William Cox became the Society's Visitor when he was Suffragan of Maryland, and has continued even though he moved half across the continent to become Assistant Bishop of Oklahoma.

NOW, IN 1987, the activities of the Sisters include the Retreat House, which must meet a real need, for the three Sisters stationed there have difficulty keeping a day now and then for themselves.

It is booked in advance by people from a wide area. One group, planning a retreat with meditations based on the Twenty-Third Psalm, brought two live sheep with them! Then there is the guest-wing, which welcomes women looking for peace, spiritual counsel, or just the quiet that is so hard to find in our world.

The altar-bread department supplies the needs of the chapel and of a few churches and missions closely connected with the community. The card department has grown amazingly in recent years — "Scriptorium" greeting-cards, notes, and holy cards (all designed by members of the community) are ordered by people in all parts of the United States and Canada. One recent order was shipped to Turkey, bringing the list of overseas customers up to ten foreign countries. Sisters go out to give addresses, retreats, lead Quiet Days, organize Vacation Bible Schools. And in Philadelphia, St Anna's enters its 77th year of service.

Most recently All Saints has become connected with the Joseph Richey House, a hospice for terminally ill cancer victims. Named for the rector of Mt Calvary who first asked the All Saints Sisters to come to Baltimore, and sponsored jointly by Mt Calvary Church and the Sisters, the Joseph Richey House received its first patients on February 12, 1987. It has already proved a place of blessing not only to the sick but to all connected with it.

But the principal work of the community is, of course, the life of the Sisters themselves. It has been said, inside the Convent, that the All Saints Sisters have always been a widely various group, and still are! But there must be some common factor that causes the Holy Spirit to call them together in this particular bond, and create from the diversity a whole.

The shake-up experienced by the religious life everywhere, after Vatican II, had its effects here, but rather delayed and rather mild. The Office of Prime was dropped, but the Divine Office is said sixfold — Lauds, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. Vespers and Compline are sung in plainsong. The habit and veil became shorter and less voluminous, but it is a traditional habit, with a white wimple framing the face, and a full-length skirt. There is less formality among the Sisters, and more scope for individual choice than there used to be. Yet it ranks as a traditional, conservative community — and the Sisters like to have it so.

SIXTY YEARS AGO, Sister Elspeth (renowned in the community as the only centenarian among the American All Saints Sisters, as well as for supervising generations of novices) summarized the distinguishing features of the All Saints life by writing:

"Three points stand out especially for us. The first is the solemn recitation of the Divine Office, for the praise and glory of God, and as an act of intercession for those who are in the world." Requests for prayers shower in — needs sometimes pitiful, sometimes terrible.

"The second is indicated by a phrase prominent in our Rule: 'Separation from the world.'" Separation from the world? There are days when the hilltop seems to be the crossroads of the world! But Sister Elspeth went on, "This does not mean separation from distractions and annoyances, from ordinary occupations and pleasures, in an unreal peace, but rather an effort to achieve such remoteness as to see where the world fails of its true purpose, and where the real heart of it still strives and yearns toward Him — so that our prayers may be wider, clearer, more earnest.

"And the third point is Poverty." Poverty? in the United States? in the 1980's? with the microwave oven, the computer, the airplane tickets? (The Sisters have generous friends!) "Poverty," Sister Elspeth says firmly. "Poverty, expressed in our motto: *Nihil habentes, omnia possidentes* — having nothing, yet possessing all things. And here we are carried out at once into the broadest horizon of the spiritual life. There is real temporal poverty, renunciation of personal possession, and the more searching requirement of surrendered gifts and endowments, to be used or not as God wills, that we may go forth. . .to the possession of all things."

READ, MARKED, LEARNED, AND INWARDLY DIGESTED

The Very Rev'd Edward H. MacBurney

Alan Richardson,
A Theological Wordbook of the Bible
Burke, *Life and Letters of Fr Andrew*
G.K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*
Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*
E.J. Bicknell,
The Thirty-Nine Articles (3rd edition)
Abp Michael Ramsey,
The Gospel and the Catholic Church
Bp J.R.H. Moorman,
The Path to Glory
ABP William Temple,
Readings in St John's Gospel
John Taylor, *The Go-Between God*
C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

Fr MacBurney, who studied at Berkeley and St Stephen's House, Oxford, has been Dean of Trinity Cathedral, Davenport, Iowa, since 1973. He is married and has three sons and three grandchildren. He is on the national board of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission.

NEXT MONTH

The Rev'd Joseph Frary, OIW,
reflects upon clerical dress
and
the Rev'd Winston Jensen
describes the state (bad)
of the Lutheran
Church of Sweden

News

ALTHOUGH "AN UNWILLING UNBELIEVER," the English novelist Kingsley Amis laments the decline of Christian belief in the Church of England. We "may be entering a world without religion," he writes in a recent essay in *The Spectator*, a literary weekly published in London. "Any attempt to hatch such a thing by direct means, as we know, will go wrong," he continues.

> What will bring it off, in this country, is the Church of England itself, out of no malice to anybody, in a general honest thought and common good to all, assisted by a number of less attractive qualities like stupidity, cowardice and — is there a polite word for it? — flattery, sycophancy, desire to appease the *bien-pensant* sentiment at almost any cost.

Of Scriptural and *Prayer Book* revision, he suggests that they

> help to render unbelievable the doctrine in and behind the original texts. "The Lord be with you, And with thy spirit": that clearly means something, even if we cannot at once paraphrase it. "The Lord be with you, And also with you" means nothing, can be forgotten. The motive for the assault is probably less sinister: by destroying its special language, to damage the status of Christianity as something special in itself, something partly detached from the things of this world.

Amis's explanation for the decline of Christian belief is that Christianity "is pervasively elitist." "Faced with society," he continues,

> most of them understandably shy away from the elitist propounding of doctrine (never the easiest of options) and settle down to discussing "values." Here at least Jack's view is as good as his master's, and all can agree that compassion and peace, for instance, are what to believe in.

"However the clergy characterise the times, their nervous conclusion is that the Church must move with them," he writes, and concludes:

> . . .this must be wrong. Let the times move as far as they like, the Church should stand still as it has done in the past. Or rather, things having gone as they have, it should move back to where it was before and preach the Christian religion, at whatever price in incomprehension, indifference and hostility, and wait for the times to return to it if they will.

In a related article published last summer, the novelist and biographer A.N. Wilson (whose two novels about English religion, *Unguarded Hours* and *Kindly Light*, the editor highly recommends) described a Mediterranean cruise taken with the Bishop of Durham as lecturer.

Wilson did not believe that Bp Jenkins deserved the reputation as a heresiarch controversy had given him. "To be a true heresiarch, you have to have a clearly identifiable point of view," he wrote. "But this man is a flibbertigibbet. . ."

> He preached at the Early Service and told us that we were all "perfectly entitled to a holiday, and some of us, if we are honest, need a holiday from believing in God." A curious thought to voice from God's board. But then, a few days later, as he stood in the Kariye Church in Constantinople, he said his faith in the Resurrection was strengthened by the dramatic fresco of Christ dragging Adam and Eve out of their infernal tombs.
>
> After a fortnight of him, I realized that the bishop is actually a dimwit more than a heretic.

Wilson's explanation for Bp Jenkins is that, "dazzled by his first taste of publicity, the Bish discovered that when he said truly silly things he always got his name in the newspapers." "But this is a very ephemeral pleasure," he concludes.

> Christians will continue to say the Creed of Nicaea. Scholars will continue to remember the heresy known as Arianism. But there is no heresy which anyone could label Jenkinism. When he retires (in less than five years time?) the hot steam will vanish into the air, and no one will remember his buzzings.

Wilson, an Anglo-Catholic who for a brief time had converted to Roman Catholicism, is the author of a number of comic novels, biographies of Milton and Hilaire Belloc, and a short book on his religious faith, *How Do We Believe?*

DECLARING THAT THE ARCIC *AGREED STATEMENTS* "are not agreeable to Scripture," the Council of the Church Society declared its "intention to make contingency plans for a continuing non-papal Church of England" at its meeting in late November.

Their intention was one of five resolutions passed developing a resolution passed at the January 1986 meeting to "rally the support of parishes opposed to ARCIC" and "encourage a continuing Church of England which is faithful to the 39 Articles of Religion, if and when concrete steps are taken to unite the Church of England and the Church of Rome."

The other resolutions disassociated themselves from General Synod's approval of the ARCIC *Final Report;* invited parochial councils to do the same; pledged the Society to "intensify its efforts to achieve Scriptural Reformation in the Church of England according to its formularies"; and reaffirmed their "allegiance to the monarch as the supreme governor of the Church of England and to the Protestant Reformed religion established by law."

The Director of the Church Society is the Rev'd Dr David Samuel. The Society publishes *The Churchman,* a theological quarterly, and *Crossway.* Their address is Whitefield House, 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.

English observers inform us that many in authority in the Church of England, relying on the official Episcopal media and the statements of interested parties, believe that the ordination of women causes no problems within the Episcopal Church and is in fact enthusiastically accepted. They request that we write the Archbishop of Canterbury to inform him of the actual situation.

Address the letters, which should be short and include local evidence and illustrations, to:

The Most Rev'd Robert Runcie
Lambeth Palace
Lambeth, London SE1 9JU
England

Continued from page one

some sort of courteous but distant connection, with much good will but no real prospect of organic reunion, while the Orthodox will likely write it off much more vigorously, retaining only their membership in the National Council of Churches, if that.

What the ecumenical prospect for the traditional Anglican group would be are difficult to predict. They are likely to be much better in all categories, since the prospective dialogue partners would have a much clearer sense of the doctrinal position out of which they would be operating.

WHAT IF AN INSTITUTIONAL RUPTURE is avoided, though? The effects of two distinct sorts of Episcopalians living under the same institutional roof in separate sub-structures in regard to ecumenical relations leaves one at a loss for conceptions. No such arrangement, so far as I can determine, has ever existed before, so there is really nothing with which to compare it. Would one group continue in dialogue with, say, the conservative Protestant Churches or with Rome and Orthodoxy, while the other followed up the COCU option? What would potential negotiating partners make of such an odd arrangement? Would they even see much point in dealing with it at all? Such are the questions which can have no answer until such an arrangement comes to be.

The Anglican Communion itself will be deeply shaken, if not destroyed, by the American innovation. If it takes place before Lambeth '88, there will be numbers of bishops who will refuse to participate in the conference. If it takes place before or after the conference, it is certain that we shall see Anglican bishops across the globe publicly repudiating the act and denying the authenticity of the episcopate exercised by such a person. The Bishop of London, Dr Graham Leonard, said some time ago that he would be out of communion not only with a woman functioning as a bishop but with all those bishops who consented to her being admitted to the exercise of this office. He will not be alone in taking this position, nor shall he be lacking for precedents in history.

The prospect which emerges from this kind of response is of something that should be causing sleepless nights at Canterbury: the formation of a parallel Anglican communion on a global scale, one in which the participants see themselves bound together across national differences, and occasionally despite them, by a shared loyalty to the Anglican way of receiving evangelical faith and catholic order, rather than by communion with some particular bishop. (This ought to happen in any event, but is certain if the American innovation comes to pass.)

OBVIOUSLY, IT WOULD BE BETTER to avoid these complications altogether by not allowing the overt act which will precipitate them to take place at all. But hope that there will be such an outcome does not seem to be very realistic, especially since some kind of open declaration by the House of Bishops entirely reversing the "sense of the House" resolution B-095s would be necessary to quiet the seething unrest within the Episcopal Church. Given the present composition and mood of the House, such would indeed be a miracle.

So we are left with the prospect of confusion and dissolution on the ecumenical scene as a consequence of allowing women to perform episcopal functions. Given the expressed prayer of the Lord Jesus that all his disciples be one, how can it be contended that this innovation is within the will of God at this moment in history? How can any woman — without implicitly unchurching entirely all dissenters — accept election to this office and ministry and undergo rites of consecration with the slightest degree of personal integrity? The Church awaits an answer.

Fr Edwards is curate at St Francis' Church, Dallas, articles editor of The Evangelical Catholic, *and an instructor in moral theology and apologetics at the Anglican School of Theology. With Bishops Stevens, Pope, Rivera, and Atkins, the Rev'd Brian Koehler, and Mrs Frances Swinford, he represented ECM in the meeting with the Presiding Bishop's Special Committee on Women in the Episcopate.*

The Evangelical and Catholic Mission
1987 Congress

Looking Toward Lambeth

October 23 and 24
Church of St Michael and All Angels
Denver, Colorado

SPEAKERS

(Each will address one of the subjects to be discussed at the Lambeth Conference in 1988)

The Rt Rev'd Stanley Atkins, retired bishop of Eau Claire and past president of ECM, will speak on ecumenism. **Dr Margaret Hewitt,** president of WAOW (Women Against the Ordination of Women) in England, will speak on mission and ministry. **The Rev'd William Oddie,** formerly of Pusey House, Oxford, and author of *What Will Happen to God?: Feminism and the Reconstruction of Christian Belief* , will speak on dogmatic theology. And **the Rev'd Herbert Ward, SSC,** Director of St Jude's Ranch for Children, will speak on social action.

For information, please contact Dorothy Spaulding,
the Executive Secretary of
the Evangelical and Catholic Mission,
at 1206 Buchanan Street, McLean, VA 22101.

For Christian Morality

The following are taken from the statements issued to their dioceses by the present and past presidents of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission in response to the assaults on Christian morality recently issued from the Diocese of Newark. Copies of their complete statements may be obtained by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to the editorial office.

THE CHURCH, AS LONG as it holds firm to its Scriptural foundations, remains the major guardian of human freedom and the integrity of the family. The issue is one of freedom. All Christian moral teaching seeks to free us from bondage to self and all that denies us the liberty to become the kind of human beings it is within us to be. The Church in its moral teaching guides us away from behavior which is destructive and leads to bondage and spiritual death, and towards behavior which leads to freedom and life.

. . .The Church well understands human nature and human frailty and therefore warns us firmly and frequently against judging those whose sexual morality is at variance with Christian standards. We are not called to judge others, but by God's grace and in real humility to witness to the truth by the holiness and integrity of our own lives.

. . .We would be betraying those to whom we are sent to serve and minister if we did not hold out to them the possibility of the moral life which both Scripture and Christian experience assure us hold the promise of true happiness, order, peace, and purpose in our lives. Authentic Christian moral teaching in all of its catholic scope and fulness has always been essentially counter-cultural in that it calls us away from behavior that most people engage in or what is generally, if tacitly, accepted by society.

St. Paul went straight to the heart of the matter when he said, "Do not conform outwardly to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God — what is good, and is pleasing to him, and is perfect" (Romans 12:2).

† The Rt Rev'd William Stevens
Bishop of Fond du Lac and
President of ECM

THE HYPOTHETICAL CASES MENTIONED by Bishop Spong sound caring, but in real life they are destructive and damning.

For instance, the Bishop speaks of a woman married to a paraplegic and denied sex because he is impotent. Most paraplegics are not, in fact, impotent. Then he mentions an older man whose wife has died, and who seeks sexual gratification without marriage because "the continuing grief he has for his deceased wife" rules out marriage. This is not compassion, but extreme selfishness. He also refers to young couples living together before marriage as a "deep valuing of the marriage bond." In point of fact, living together before marriage actually reduces the possibility of a strong marriage, according to most current studies. Finally, the Bishop speaks of the elderly who live together because marriage would reduce their Social Security income. For most, the Social Security Administration has changed the rules to eliminate this inequity. However, would it not be more proper for the Church to attack bureaucratic error than to condone what would amount to immorality? Or perhaps we should, as clergy, marry the couples under the law of the Church, in violation of the law of the State, and risk going to jail in civil disobedience of unjust laws.

There is a wise old legal saw: "Hard cases make bad law." Spong's hard cases truly make bad law. More to the point, he gives us two alternatives: Condemn the hedonism of the age, or conform to it. As Christians, we have only one choice, and that is to condemn the sins of the age, while loving the sinners (and all of us are sinners). How can we properly minister to people caught up in hard choices, and held prisoner by sin, if we are unwilling to own up to sinful behavior?

. . .To seriously consider changing or abolishing such well-tested precepts, rooted in Scripture and the will of a loving God, is to speak nonsense. To predicate such action on the cultural values of a society which aborts more unborn children than Hitler killed in the Holocaust, which has the highest rate of criminal executions in the free world, which has the highest rate of violent crime known, and which appears to be headed for nuclear suicide, is simply unbelievable.

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